



Foundation “Mi Cutisa” hosts an evening of culture in honor of “International Poetry Day”

On Wednesday, March 21, the Foundation “Mi Cutisa” in cooperation with “Grupo Corector di Papiamento” (GCP) presented a festive evening of music, poetry, and enlightening lectures in the courtyard of the Instituto di Cultura in Oranjestad.

Both organizations have the purpose of encouraging pride and literary achievement using Aruba’s “mother tongue” Papiamento. The program presented in celebration of “International Poetry Day 2007” celebrated not only poetry in Papiamento, but also the cultural accomplishments of Arubans in music, dance and art, aside from promulgating Papiamento in various forms of literature.

The Director of Mi Cutisa, Mavis Krozendijk-Eckmeyer, opened the evening and welcomed the gathering, which included the Minister of Culture Ramon Lee and his wife, along with a number of Aruba’s cultural luminaries such as Hubert (Lio) Booi, who founded the Instituto di Cultura.

Presentations during the program include a synopsis by educator Mirto Lacle, the moving force behind the recent Aruba Art and Animation Symposium that took place on the island at the beginning of March.

The audience was moved by a presentation of dance by the Grupo Teatral under the direction of John Freddy Montya and a musical interlude of two classical pieces by violinist Omar Kock.

Frank Croes, the Director of the Instituto di Cultura recited a poem from the book “Habri bo Hala Hancho” (Spread Your Wings,) which is a collection of poems in Papiamento by varied artists, expressing pride and love for the language. Tino Ruiz of GCP joined him in presenting this new work in Papiamento to the public.

During the program, a newly published book by Aruban author Agnes Leslie, who resides in Holland, was presented to the Minister of Culture by Agnes’ sister, Joan. The book is titled “De Bloeiende Flamboyant,” which means “The Flourishing Flamboyant.” The Flamboyant is a tree found on Aruba with brilliant red flowers, which the author describes as bringing her happiness through tragic times.

The central portion of the program was devoted to the poetry readings of two generations. Rosabelle Illes of Aruba, not even twenty years old displayed remarkable sophistication and intellectualism in her poems, which interwove both Papiamento and English. Established poet, designer, illustrator, photographer, stage actor, and director Philip Rademaker of Curacao graced the evening with his presence. He recited a number of his works for the gathering, and then the evening finished traditional regional music from the Tipico Pegasus.

During this cultural evening, attendees had the opportunity to peruse and purchase a number of works in Papiamento printed by Charuba Publishing and Mi Cutisa.

The Oranjestad Kunsthuis pays tribute to Pablo Neruda on International Poetry Day

The management of the Oranjestad Kunsthuis, located across from Fort Zoutman, celebrated March 21, the day designated by UNESCO as International Poetry Day, with an evening of readings by the poetry group HALA. The celebration of expression through poetry was dedicated to the memory of Pablo Neruda, (1904 -1973) which is the pen name of the Chilean writer and communist politician Ricardo Eliecer Neftalí Reyes Basoalto.

Pablo Neruda is considered one of the greatest and most influential poets of the 20th century. Critic and biographer Alistair Reid has stated that Neruda is the most widely read poet since William Shakespeare. His poetry has been translated into dozens of languages. Political activist and revolutionary, he is noted for reciting to the largest audience ever, over 100,000 in the Pacaembú Stadium in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1945. Tens of thousands of mourners attended his funeral in 1973, despite attempts to suppress his popularity by Augusto Pinochet, who had just taken power in Chile through a coup d’état. The throngs that came to mourn Neruda, even though forbidden by a curfew, made his funeral what is considered the first formal protest against the dictator’s regime.

Wednesdays are usually the creative “happy hour” at the Oranjestad Kunsthuis, a gallery and café where many local artists show their work and congregate. On March 21, the gallery showcased the island’s

literary talents, embodied by the eight members of Hobenan Apoyando Literatura y Arte (HALA.) These included Indzy Hernandis, Bethsarim van Koetsveld, Quincy Zaandam, Oscar Vilcapoma, Susana de la Oliva, Wilfred Jansen, Eribert de la Marre, and Gerwin Croes. Also stepping up to the mike was the proprietor of Cuba's Cookin' Restaurant, Douglas Markus, well known on Aruba for his poetry.

The Oranjestad Kunsthuis was a perfect venue for the celebration of International Poetry Day, and the young poets found a receptive audience, as the regular patrons and Kunsthuis curator Gilbert Senchi have made a place where creativity flourishes and is continually encouraged. Their poetry was modern, incorporating props such as their cell phones, and often expressing the angst and frustrations of youth, protesting the "establishment," and human foibles, which they seem to see so clearly at that age. They will be performing again on Saturday, March 31 during a fundraising event on The Freewinds cruise ship. Tickets for the literary evening are available by calling telephone #568-9541.